NORBROOK DIRECT LTD
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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Get access to your email when you are out and about.
- Why Sending Large Email Attachments is Such A Bad Idea!
- Get more time for your REAL business, Delegation & Outsourcing!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Email Attachment Issues 2
Delegation & Outsourcing 3
BritTrix VoIP Phone Systems 4

Direct Focus

OCTOBER 2007

Email On The Move

EMail Delivered Direct to your Mobile Phone

If you are one of our customers who has an SBS server then now's the time to think about upgrading your Mobile phone. I can hear you now, "What's my mobile phone got to do with the server?"…..

Well one little known feature of SBS its ability to send and receive email direct to a compatible mobile device, like a phone or PDA. What this means is that you can enjoy all the advantages of your familiar desktop Outlook program on your mobile phone! This includes sending and receiving email, access to your full contacts list, calendars and reminders and to-do list.

There's no need to bother with cables or complicated sync programs. Your phone automatically connects back to your server over the mobile network on a schedule and syncs up all your mailbox changes. So whatever you do to your mailbox on your desktop / laptop is automatically reflected on your mobile phone and vice versa.

The SPVM3100 (features slide out mini keyboard!)

From our server installation records I can see that at least 30 of you reading this could be using the facility in your organizations right now! Its already built into the software on your server so why not take advantage of it!

Its particularly useful if you spend a lot of time out of the office and don't have access to your email. Now anywhere you have a mobile signal you have full access to your email and contacts.

Most of the big mobile networks can offer you phones that use the Windows Mobile operating system. This is fully integrated with the Exchange mail system on your server and makes it easy to set up the correct mail configuration.

Two of the phones we have had extensive experience testing are the SPVE650 and SPVM3100 these are both on the Orange Network, most of the other networks offer the same or similar phones.

The SPVE650

For a demo and more details on how to get you up and running with this technology why don't you drop us an email or of course you can always give us a call on **08000-669900.**

Are You Guilty Of Clogging Up Your Company Email System? It Wasn't Me Guv....Honest!

MARTINS THOUGHTS ON WHY SENDING HUGE FILE ATTACHMENTS IS SUCH A BAD IDEA!

We've all done it at some point or another. You have some files you need to send to somebody, you add them as an attachment to an email then wonder why its still sat in your outbox an hour later. Alternatively the person you sent them to claims never too have received them. You insist you sent the thing but it never does turn up having apparently disappeared into a black hole somewhere out in cyberspace……

Handling a lot of Norbrook's Internet related support calls I can tell you that issues relating to email are a major headache. Its probably one of the most complicated things to sort out. Once the email leaves your server (assuming it does!) to a large extent its out of our control and in the lap of the "internet" gods.

One thing I have noticed lately is the amount of calls we are getting related to sending large attachments. I know a lot of you have this sort of requirement , maybe you send and receive lots of plans and drawings or something similar with a heavy graphic content.

If you find you have problems sending or receiving these types of documents then one factor is without doubt the size of some of your email attachments.

No one anywhere on the net can "reliably" **send** an email with attached files bigger than about 15MB. And I can pretty confidently say you have never **received** via email a file attachment over 25Mb.

Let me explain;

Between you and your destination there are many email servers that relay your email messages. You or I have no

control over the configuration of these email servers nor do we have any control over the route your email follows to reach its destination.

All, and I mean all, organisations who maintain the infrastructure necessary to send and receive emails have upper limits on the size of email message that can pass through their email servers. As a rule on the internet this limit is 20Mb. If the total size of your email message exceeds this limit then it will probably fail at some point along its route when it reaches an email relay server that rejects it. Its not uncommon to see some servers having only a 5Mb limit! You may or may not receive a failure message depending on how that particular email server is configured to respond to oversized messages.

All the big free email services like Hotmail, Yahoo, Aol have limits ranging from 10mb – 20mb. Most of the big UK ISP's also impose limits on email message size passing through their servers, in particular BT.

These limits are imposed to protect the network as there are limits to the capacity of email servers. Just thinking logically, how many people each sending a 50Mb message would it take to bring down the entire internet email system? Not that many. If a spammer could send just 10,000 messages each of 50Mb it would probably bring the internet to its knees. You have to remember that some of the worst individual spammers can send over a 1,000,000 messages a day via hijacked systems (and yes you did read the zeros right in that statement!) Ok so these spam mails are highly annoying but they are probably not more than 5 or 10K in size and not a threat to the overall email system. I wont get into the whole Spam problem here but you can maybe begin to see some of the complexity of email delivery.

We had a support call a few months back that we eventually tracked down to someone trying to send a 38mb attachment! Now I know these days when you can buy USB pen drives with 1gb+ memory sizes a 38mb file seems puny but in terms of email its huge! To transfer large files between computers over the internet basically means not using email. Its was simply never designed to handle this type of large file transfer.

What you need is a file storage area based system. This is where you can basically upload a file to a secure area on a web server and allow someone else to log in and download it. This totally avoids any interaction with the email system and its limitations. Its possible to build a custom system like this on rented web space but there are lots of commercial services out there.

One of the services we have recommend to clients in the past has been www.yousendit.com. This is a really easy system to use and has worked flawlessly for us.

Delegation and Outsourcing.....

Imagine this:

Bill Gates gets up at 4:00 a.m. to drive to work. Upon arrival, he checks his e-mail and sees he has 43,224 new messages since last night. As he starts to answer the first one, the phone rings. It's a woman from Slough!

She is having trouble with the new Vista operating system. Bill gives her a quick solution and gets back to his e-mails. One down, 43,223 more to go. He quickly checks his sales orders and sees that another 8,907 copies of Microsoft Office sold the day before. He gets out a fresh CD and starts to burn a copy of Office. While the CD is burning, Bill fields another technical support call. The call is finishing just as the CD is done burning. Bill affixes a label to the CD, places it in a box, inserts a user manual, and then prepares the package for shipping.

One order down, 8,906 to go. His Mobile phone rings. It's his wife. Bring home cheese (Melinda loves cheese). Back to the phones …

Of course Bill Gates doesn't run Microsoft all by himself (he has at least three other employees!). But my point is that it is impossible to run a successful business by yourself. And you don't have to be as big as Microsoft. As small business owners, we'd prefer to spend the bulk of our time doing the things we need to do to grow our business. These are the activities that require our direct involvement and should take up a vast majority of our days. Not the "Other Stuff."

The Other Stuff:
Bookkeeping, vendor orders, inventory control, appointment scheduling, e-mail writing/ answering, sample orders, returning phone calls for minor issues, minor troubleshooting, buying office supplies, website maintenance, sorting mail, sending mail …

I'm exhausted just typing the list…. How's it possible to grow our business and concentrate on our "real" work when we are so bogged down with the Other Stuff?

The answer is: we can't. It's essential that we learn to delegate. Why is it so difficult for us to let go of these tasks and hire someone or outsource this stuff? From discussions with many small business owners, I've learned that it boils down to two main reasons:

"It's too expensive"
Yes, it's scary to pay someone to help in your business, especially if you feel you aren't making enough to justify it. But the interesting fact is that small business owners begin to make more money when they let go of those tasks that are not only depleting their energy, but taking time away from doing the work that will really bring more money in. It is actually too expensive to NOT pay someone to take those money-sucking, energy-draining jobs from you.

If you consider how long it takes to do the "Other Stuff" on a weekly basis, you will see how much time is being wasted on activities that do not contribute to the growth of your business. By hiring someone, or simply Outsourcing the task, your time is free to focus upon promoting and marketing your business.

I can't give up anything / I am a control freak / I need it all done my way

I know, I know. I've been there, too! So here are a few suggestions:

Take small steps: Give up just one thing this month. Can you allow someone else to file your folders? Organize your books? Answer your phone? As time goes on, you'll get more comfortable letting tasks go. Practice makes perfect.

Set up systems:
The next time you do any of your non-core tasks, write down all of the steps you take, one by one, as if you are writing a detailed system for someone who will be taking over this task (because that's exactly what you are doing!). This will take you a little extra time, but within a few weeks, you will have systems documented for all of your business chores. You can be more assured that an assistant will perform tasks the same way you would!

Let Norbrook take the strain out of managing your I.T systems with our contract Computer Maintenance service

Contracted support for your computer hardware provides you with business continuity through:

• Guaranteed response times

• Guaranteed fix times

• Remote monitoring of your operating system helps avoid problems occurring, thus avoiding potentially expensive downtime.

• Fixed price contracts allow you to budget accordingly, while providing peace of mind that any problems will be addressed on a timely basis.

Flexible payment terms allow you to spread payments, thus easing pressure on your all-important cash flow.

For more info, friendly help and advice give us a call on **08000 669900**

BritTrix VoIP Phone Systems

Last month we brought you news of our ground breaking new IP based phone system the BritTrix PBX range. You may also have read our special VoIP phone report which has created a lot of interest. VoIP may seem like the flavour of the month but its one of those technologies that has finally crossed the threshold into mainstream use. You'll hear a lot more about it in the years to come as its going to be the basis of how most of our phone calls are made. BT are rolling out a massive upgrade to the country's telephone network backbone. The upgrade is known as the 21st Century Network or 21CN and will mean that within the next two years or so everyone's telephone line will be essentially VoIP based.

Our BritTrix systems allow you to take advantage of an IP / VoIP based system right now. We really have done our homework in finding the right set of features to offer. Remember you can use as many or as few as these things as you like. Unlike a traditional phone system it's not going to cost you a penny more whether you use a feature or not. It's easy to enable or disable the stuff you need as and when required:-

• Web Based Administration, • Unlimited Extensions, • Remote Extensions (home workers), • Receptionist Operator Panel, • Digital Receptionist (also known as an Auto Attendant or IVR), • Time Scheduling, • Extension based Voicemail, • Route calls over the internet (Voice over IP – VoIP), • Least Cost Routing, • Retain your existing numbers, • Link Multiple offices together with free calls, • Easily set up to handle Multi-tenanted buildings, • Music on Hold, • Call Blocking, • Call Return, • Caller ID, • Blacklists, • Call Transfer, • DISA (Direct Inwards System Access), • Speed Dial, • CDR (Call Detail Record Logging) – Reporting, • Call Pickup, • Call Parking, • Call Forwarding , • Ring Groups, • Call Queuing, • Audio recordings of calls , • Distinctive Ringing, • Do Not Disturb, • Call Waiting, • Three-way Calling, • Follow-Me, • Click To Call (Dial from Outlook and Act!), • Conference Calls, • Overhead Paging / Public Announcement, • Wake up / Alarm Calls , • Local Weather Reports , • Free Updates to the software, • Take advantage of the latest IP based phone technology, • No new wiring

I know the above is a lot to take in and to be honest you can only truly appreciate the leap over a traditional phone system by actually having a hands on play! We'd be more than happy to come out and give you a demo, it'll take no more than an hour. All you need is an internet connection. We have a demo kit which we'd be happy to leave with you for a couple of days so you can review things at your own pace. As always, for a friendly chat about all aspects of VoIP and what it can do for your business why not give us a call on **08000 669900.**

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A message from the David Lloyd
(Managing Director)

I hope you have enjoyed this issue of Direct Focus. We have lots more information and topics to cover in future issues. To ensure your receive a priority copy and to help the environment why not subscribe to this newsletter via email. You can sign-up on our website at :-**www.norbrookdirect.co.uk**

If any of the topics covered have raised any questions or if you would like to know more about any featured product or service then please call our office on:-

FREE PHONE 08000 669900

Kind Regards
David Lloyd.